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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the comprehensive evaluation of a new Ed.D. Program in Educational Leadership housed in East Carolina University's (ECU) School of Education. The program proposed to prepare students for professional life through development of career leadership skills; utilization, development, and dissemination of research; and service to the community through internship and research programs. The evaluation of the program was conducted through a survey and telephone interviews of a sample of doctoral students (N=38) enrolled in Spring 1996, graduates of the program (N=8) and the advisory committee members (N=12) for the program. The respondents in this study indicated that the academic rigor, the advising, the interactions among the students and faculty, and the schedule and structure of the program were effective. They felt, however, that the research and methodology component and the dissertation process could be strengthened and that possible gender and racial insensitivity may impact the effectiveness of the program. The data suggest that an adjustment to changing interpersonal dynamics between professors and students and deliberate planning are essential to the effective implementation of this type of program. The faculty has already begun to make changes in response to this study, including reconceptualization of the research sequence and development of new procedures for the approval of dissertation proposals. (Contains 13 references.) (PRW)

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A Case Study of an Ed. D in Educational Leadership, School of Education, East Carolina University

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)"

This paper discusses the comprehensive evaluation of a relatively new Ed. D. Program in Educational Leadership that is housed in East Carolina University's (ECU) School of Education (SOE). The proposal for the program stated,

> It will prepare students for full professional lives through its emphasis upon the development of career leadership skills. It will focus on the utilization, development, and dissemination of research. Through its internship and research programs, it will provide services to the community. (East Carolina University, 1990, pp. 8-9)

The SOE faculty wanted to produce educational leaders who could develop and lead self-renewing organizations.

Self-renewing Organizations

Human beings generally have a strong commitment to the status quo. Schon (1971) calls it a desire for the stable state.

> Belief in the stable state is belief in the unchangeability, the constancy of central aspects of our lives, or belief that we can attain such a constancy. Belief in the stable state is strong and deep in us. We institutionalize it in every social domain. We do this in spite of our talk about change and our approval of dynamism. (Schon, 1971, p. 1)

Most organizations develop a culture that tries to protect the stable state in organizational members, i.e., protect them from information overload and uncertainty (Schein, 1985; Schon, 1971). Yet the rapid rate of change in most societies suggests that

the reality of the stable state will be lost to most people (Schon, 1971). If an organization's culture, structure, and procedures do not adapt to meet changing needs, the organization will become ineffective (Schein, 1985)

Argyris (1983) argued that an organization could meet the needs of its members and effectively meet its external challenges by developing the ability to learn as an organization, i.e., renew itself. Argyris and Schon (1974) called this ability double-loop learning. Double-loop learning attempts to create situations "in which the basic assumptions behind ideas or policies are confronted, in which hypotheses are tested publicly, and in which the processes are disconfirmable, not self-sealing" (Argyris, 1983, pp. 103-104).

> The end result should be increases in the effectiveness of decision making, in the monitoring of decisions and policies, and in the probability that errors and failures will be communicated openly and that actors will learn from the feedback. (Argyris, 1983, p. 104)

A necessary condition for an organization that wants to pursue double-loop learning is having organizational members who possess that knowledge and skill. In other words, if we want the schools of the 21st century to be self-renewing organizations we must produce educational leaders whose actions are a function of these governing variables: (a) valid information, (b) free and informed choice, (c) internal commitment to the choice, and (d) the constant monitoring of implementation (Argyris, 1983). The ECU Ed. D. Program in Educational Leadership attempted to prepare educational leaders who met those necessary conditions.

ECU's Ed. D. Program in Educational Leadership

The Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina gave East Carolina University permission to establish a Doctor of Education degree program in 1990. The Program leads to an Ed. D in Educational Leadership. It is designed for senior school administrators. The Program is based in the School of Education and administered by the Department of Educational Leadership (LEED), but it uses courses and faculty from other schools within the University. The program has five components, which combine for a minimum of 60 hours beyond the Masters Degree: (a) The leadership core requires a minimum of 24 credit hours. (b) The cognate area requires 12 credit hours. This area is designed to complement the student's major area of study and his career goals. (c) The one-year supervised internship is designed to provide leadership experiences in educational settings. The internship experience relies heavily on reflective journals and action research. The internship generates 6 credit hours. (d) The research core is designed to prepare students to evaluate, synthesize, and apply research to research problems and to generate new research through carefully designed studies. This component has a minimum of 12 credit hours. (e) The doctoral dissertation is designed to address an area of inquiry that serves not only to advance the student's knowledge but also benefits educational organizations. The dissertation generates 6 credit hours.

The faculty in Educational Leadership worked in collaboration with faculty in the School of Education and other units within the University to develop a program with high expectations and high support. The faculty wanted to emphasize the translation of theory

into practice (Argyris & Schon, 1974) that would benefit education in North Carolina. They also wanted to persuade students to believe in the efficacy of disciplined inquiry (Jaeger, 1988) through collaborative efforts and through modeling (Sergiovanni, 1987). The LEED faculty emphasized the use of problem-based learning in the Ed. D. curriculum (Barrows, 1985; Pajak, Tanner, Rees, & Holmes., 1995; Wilkerson & Felletti, 1989). The following factors guide the instructional process:

1. Students encounter or identify an issue which offers a problem of professional practice.
2. They engage in problem-solving in a group interactive process.
3. They apply their new information and knowledge to the problem.
4. They summarize what has been learned (Pajak, et al., 1995).

In other words, the Educational Leadership faculty try to prepare students to become double-loop learners and to model double-loop learning for the students (Argyris & Schon, 1974).

Educational Leadership Department (LEED)

The LEED Department offers four graduate degree programs, MAED in Supervision, MA--Masters of School Administration, Ed. S. in Educational Administration and Supervision, and Ed. D in Educational Leadership. Ten faculty positions have resided in the Department.

Program Implementation

The first cohort of 11 doctoral students enrolled in Fall 1990. Sixty-five students have enrolled in the program in six cohorts, i.e., 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995.

Fourteen students have graduated from the program (see Appendix A), 1 died, 5 have withdrawn--8 % attrition, and 7 did not take courses in Spring 1996. Thirty-eight students were enrolled in courses during the Spring of 1996.

The Evaluation Process

A team of three faculty members and one graduate student in the School of Education, East Carolina University doctoral program conducted the evaluation during 1996. Given the background and goals of the Ed. D. Program in Educational Leadership, the evaluation team developed several evaluation questions:

1. Was the academic program rigorous?
2. Was the advising in the program effective?
3. What was the climate and culture of the program?
4. What was the nature of the interaction among the faculty and students?
5. Was the design and scheduling of the program effective?
6. Did the students experience personal growth?
7. Did the students experience professional growth?
8. What suggestions did the students have to improve the program?

The evaluation team addressed these questions by surveying a census sample of the doctoral students who were enrolled during Spring 1996, conducting telephone interviews with a sample of students, conducting telephone interviews with graduates of the program, and conducting interviews with the advisory committee for the program.

Survey Results

The 38 students enrolled in Spring 1996 were the population for a student survey (see Appendix B). The survey addressed 10 issues: (a) academic rigor, (b) advising, (c) cohesion of cohort group, (d) respect and courtesy of the faculty, (e) access to LEED faculty, (f) access to other School of Education faculty, (g) translation of theory to practice, (h) scheduling, (i) research methodology, and (j) recommendations.

The results of the student survey were positive. The student survey had nine Likert scale positive statements about the program. The respondents were asked to rate the positive statements from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (4). The 30 respondents, 79% of the population, agreed or strongly agreed with the nine Likert scale questions (see Figure 1)

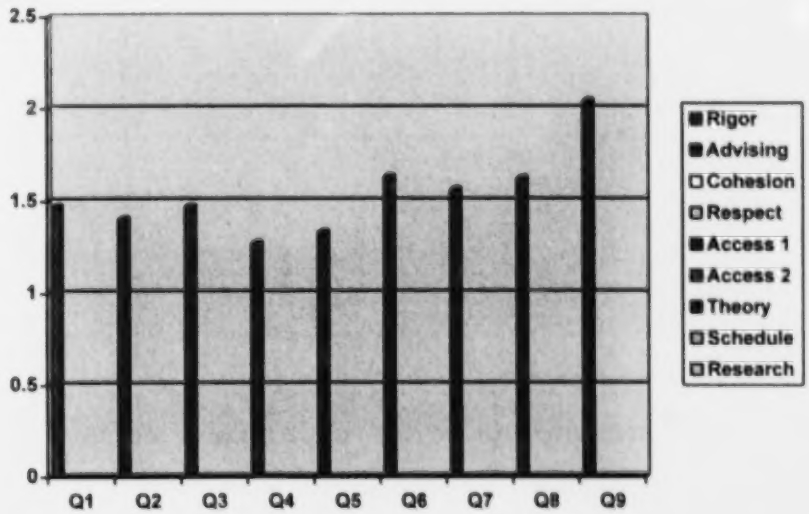

Figure 1. Histogram of Scores on Likert Scale Questions of Student Survey

Twenty-six of the respondents made comments or suggestions. Two themes were mentioned by several students: (a) The research sequence should place more emphasis on the practical application of research methodology, (b). Students should receive better guidance and support through the dissertation process, (c) The admissions criteria should be broadened to include classroom teachers, and (d) general positive comments about he program. Other comments addressed the following issues:

1. More opportunities for cohort cohesion
2. Reduce the size of the required seminars
3. Use more diverse instructional strategies
4. Offer more courses more often.
5. Address gender and racial bias.

Telephone Interviews of Current Students

The sample for the telephone interviews was a random sample of 20% of the 38 students who were enrolled in Spring 1996. The interview protocol (see Appendix C) addressed the eight evaluation questions.

All the students in the sample (n=8) took part in the telephone interviews.

Five interview questions addressed academic rigor. The responses were positive. However, two responses expressed concern about the quality of the methodology sequence in the program. Four interview questions addressed the quality and content of advising. The responses were very positive. Three questions addressed the cohesion and cooperation of the cohorts. The responses were mixed. The majority of responses were positive, but several responses indicated that they felt that their cohort lacked cohesion.

Five questions addressed the interaction with faculty. The responses were positive, but one respondent indicated some problems with one faculty member. Five questions addressed the internship. The responses were positive. Four questions addressed personal growth and development and three questions addressed professional growth and development. All the responses in both categories were positive. Three questions addressed the residence requirement. The responses were very mixed.. The responses ranged from "Likes it"; "no problem with it" to "Do away with them; formality--no useful purpose". Other responses indicated that the residence requirement had some positive benefit on professional development, but lack of adequate funding for the residence requirement had negative consequences for respondents and their families. Two questions addressed the scheduling of courses. The responses were positive, but some respondents indicated that they would like smaller course sections and more publicity for the multi-year course schedule. Two questions addressed socialization in the culture of the program. The responses were positive. Two questions addressed support and assistance. The responses to these questions were positive. The last section of the interview addressed recommendations. The recommendations addressed adding more technology to the curriculum, improving the integration of methodology with other courses, and integration of some additional topics and procedures to the curriculum.

The responses to the interview protocol were generally very positive. The recommendations seemed rational and reasonable.

Telephone Interviews of Graduates.

The interview protocol for the graduates of the ECU Ed. D. Program in Educational Leadership has three questions: (a). Please describe your experience in the Ed. D. Program at ECU? (b). What impact did the Program have on your personally and professionally? (c). How can the Program be improved? Eight of the 14 students who had completed the program by Spring 1996 took part in the telephone interviews. The respondents were extremely positive about their experiences in particular and the Ed. D. Program in general. They believed that the ECU Ed. D. Program in Educational Leadership was equal to or superior to similar programs in North Carolina. They believed that their programs of study had prepared them well for their current positions. They recommended that new students in the Ed. D. Program should start planning early for their dissertation. Also, they suggested that the new students should receive an orientation from graduates and more experienced students. In addition, the respondents emphasized the use of possible dissertation topics in research classes would make their exercises more practical. In general, the respondents were very positive about their experiences in the ECU Ed. D. Program in Educational Leadership.

Telephone Interviews of Advisory Committee

The interview protocol for the Advisory Committee had two questions: (a). What is your impression of ECU's Ed.D. Program in Educational Leadership? (b). Is the Program operating the way it was intended? The original Advisory committee for the ECU Ed. D. Program in Educational Leadership had 25 members. Several members had retired and moved from the area, one member is deceased, and several did not return

telephone calls. Twelve members of the Advisory Committee responded to the two questions. The respondents believed that the program is doing well, but that it needs to change to keep up with technological growth and expectations. They believed program implementation is close to its original design with one big exception. The State of North Carolina never provided the funds to support full-time doctoral study that were promised up to the week the first doctoral student entered the program. In general, the Advisory Committee had very positive perceptions of the ECU's Ed. D. Program and the Program factors that ECU could control.

Summary of Evaluation Findings

The data from the survey and telephone interviews indicate that respondents believed that the academic rigor, the advising, and the climate and culture of the ECU Ed. D. Program in Educational Leadership were good and effective. Respondents did mention a concern about the integration of appropriate research methodology into overall program of study.

The perceptions of the interactions among faculty and students were positive, but student cohorts could be more cohesive and students could feel more comfortable about communicating with faculty. Perceptions of the structure and schedule of the program were positive, but the unfunded residence requirement was problematic. There was agreement that the residence requirement was beneficial to professional development, but there was also agreement that the unfunded residence requirement added significant stress to program participants and their families.

All the students and graduates of the Ed. D. Program reported personal and professional growth and development. The recommendations from the respondents suggested that the ECU faculty need to continue their emphasis on data-based decision making, program planning, and problem-based learning and to strengthen their communication and interpersonal skills.

Reflections

The 14 students who had completed the Ed. D. Program in Educational Leadership at the time of this analysis developed dissertations that investigated questions that intrigued them and addressed the needs of public education (see Appendix A). The LEED faculty's efforts to incorporate problem-based learning and technology into the Ed. D. curriculum conform with best practices in the field (Geltner, 1995; Pajak et al., 1995; Wendel, 1992). In addition, the use of cohorts and field-based internships are consistent with emerging trends in the field (Hackman & Price, 1995).

The student survey and interviews indicated that students believe that the program is rigorous, the advising is effective, the interactions among the students and faculty are effective, and the schedule and structure of the program are effective. The comments suggested that the faculty could strengthen the research and methodology component and the dissertation process. In addition, some elements of the culture, such as perceived gender and racial insensitivity, may impact the effectiveness of ECU's Ed. D. Program in Educational Leadership. These findings are consistent with conclusions of an assessment of a relatively new Ed. D. program in Educational Leadership at the University of Georgia.

> A major conclusion drawn from the data is that an adjustment to changing interpersonal dynamics between professors and students and deliberate planning are essential to the effective implementation of this type of program. (Pajak, et al., 1995, p. 18)

The observations of the evaluation team suggest that the LEED faculty could improve how we model double-loop learning, i.e., we do not always practice what we preach. For example, we need to improve collaboration with all School of Education faculty and our graduate students. We need to work harder at following the guiding principles of double-loop learning: (a) valid information for decisions, (b) free and informed choice, (c) internal commitment to choice, and (d) the constant monitoring of implementation (Argyris, 1983).

Implications

The faculty in the School of Education has already begun to reconceptualize the research sequence and its relationship to the other elements of the Ed. D. Program of study. In addition, the faculty have committed to program of peer evaluation for professional growth and annual programs of staff development. The Educational Leadership Department has developed new procedures for the approval of dissertation proposals, has adopted a revised dissertation manual for students, and will provide more systematic opportunities for a cohort to meet. The limited resources of the program prohibit broadening the admissions criteria and providing more resources to support full-time study.

The size of the required seminars will be reduced by offering a second section of the seminars. The operational objectives for the 1996-1997 School Year focus on strengthening the range of instructional strategies that the faculty will use. The concern about gender and racial bias is troubling. Rumors have circulated about these problems in the School of Education, but we have not addressed them directly. This is a major challenge for the faculty of the School of Education. I hope we can meet it.

Despite that limitation and the other challenges that we face, ECU's School of Education has made significant progress in the implementation of the Ed. D. in Educational Leadership. The findings of the comprehensive evaluation and the professional success of our students, e.g., one of the current students in the Ed. D. Program in Educational Leadership was selected as North Carolina Principal of the Year, support that conclusion. We believe that faculty commitment to disciplined inquiry and reflective practice will be central in the program's continued growth and development.

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Appendix A

Ed. D. GRADUATES	YEAR	DISSERTATION TOPIC
Nancy Lucille Daniel	1996	Field Testing Science Curriculum
Karen Robbins Dawkins	1996	Fostering Teachers' Understandings of the Nature of Science: A Professional Development Model
Jerry L. Everhart	1995	Development and Evaluation of a Staff Development Model Addressing Issues of Concerns, Beliefs, and Practices, of Middle Grades Teachers.
Mary Whitaker Fox	1995	A Model of a Community Program for African American Males.
Mark Raymond Marquez	1996	A Competency Based Needs Assessment of the Continuing Education for Certified Clinical Social Workers.
Lienne Federico Medford	1996	A Curriculum Development Response to the North Carolina Public Professional Practices Commission's Call for Cultural Diversity.
Geraldine Campbell Munn	1996	Preparing Teachers for Culturally Diverse Classrooms: Multicultural Education for Preservice Teachers.
Joseph Anthony Nelson	1993	An Evaluation of Staff Development Activities of the Northeast Technical Assistance Center.
Laurie Jean Spring	1996	An Assessment of the Perception and Awareness of Quality in the Johnson County School System.
Brenda Strickland Tinkham	1994	The Impact of Alternative Methods of Teacher Evaluation on Teacher Perception of Organizational Climate, teacher Instructional Practices, and Teacher Self-Esteem.

Charles R. Watson	1992	Attitudes of Middle School Teachers Toward Practices Recommended for Middle Schools.
Rodman J. Weston, Jr.	1993	The Trifactor Model of Leadership in Secondary Schools: Organizational Harmony as a function of Leader Behavior, Follower Maturity, and Event Severity.
Susan E. Whitfield	1995	A Study of Reasons for Student Nonattendance in four rural high schools in Eastern North Carolina.
Roger L. Whitley	1995	A Comparison of the Educational Performances of Athletes and Nonathletes in 133 North Carolina High Schools.

Appendix B

STUDENT EVALUATION SURVEY
ECU SCHOOL OF EDUCATION Ed. D. PROGRAM IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Please circle the year that you were admitted to the Ed. D. Program:

1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995.

1. The academic rigor of the program and individual courses is appropriate for the development of scholarly practitioners of educational leadership.

1	2	3	4
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

2. My advising in this program has been informative and helpful

1	2	3	4
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

3. My class cohort is a cohesive group; we cooperate with one another.

1	2	3	4
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

4. The faculty treat me with respect and courtesy.

1	2	3	4
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

5. I have had adequate access and interaction with the faculty who have taught courses in the program.

1	2	3	4
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

6. I have had adequate access and interaction with other faculty in the Department and School.

1	2	3	4
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

7. I have learned a great deal about the translation of theory into effective practice during my internship.

1	2	3	4
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

8. The scheduling of courses has been logical, well-organized, and effective.

1	2	3	4
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

9. The research methodology courses have been effective.

1	2	3	4
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

10. What recommendations do you have for the improvement of the Ed. D. program in educational leadership.

_____

_____

_____

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Appendix C

Interview Protocol for the Evaluation
of the Ed. D. Program in Educational Leadership

Academic Rigor

1. Do you feel that the program has challenged you to perform up to your potential. If so, please give me an example. If not please explain.

2. Are there areas in the program you feel are too easy or not at the level you think is appropriate for doctoral level training? Explain.

3. Do you believe that the courses in research methodology have been effective in preparing you to conduct action research in schools and to conduct the research for your dissertation? Explain.

4. If you have knowledge of other doctoral programs, e.g., UNC Chapel Hill, how does this program compare in terms of curriculum and other academic requirements?

5. Would you recommend this program to a friend?

Advising

1. Who is your advisor? (Program and/or Dissertation)

2. How often do you meet with your advisor? Has he or she been available?

3. Has your advisor been helpful in the following areas:

   ____ Selecting courses
   ____ Selecting a dissertation topic
   ____ Reviewing your proposal
   ____ Making referrals when appropriate to other faculty for assistance
   ____ Sharing relevant and important information that will assist you in managing matriculation issues.

4. Do you feel that your advisor has some investment in your succeeding in the program?

Cohesion and Cooperation of the Cohorts

1. Have you become acquainted with other students in the program?

2. Do you work together in study groups or assist one another in obtaining assignments and reading materials by sharing notes, etc.?

3. On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being the highest), how would you rank your class in terms of cohesion and cooperation?

Interaction with Faculty

1. Do you feel comfortable going to your instructor(s) for assistance or clarification of course assignments, material covered in lectures or assigned reading materials, etc.?

2. Do you feel that you can disagree with your instructor(s) without the threat of reprisal or being subject o ridicule?

3. Do you know faculty members other than your instructors? If so in what capacity?

4. Do you feel comfortable approaching other faculty members with whom you have not taken a course for assistance?

5. On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being the highest), how would rank the graduate faculty on being approachable by students?

Internship

1. Do you feel that the program offers internships that allow you to continue to grow in terms of your professional development?

2. Is there sufficient diversity in the internship experience to meet the interests and needs of the students?

3. Is the program open to suggestions for other possible internship sites or experiences?

4. Do you feel that you have or should have a voice in deciding upon an internship?

5. Has the supervision been adequate for your internship?

Personal Growth and Development

1. Do you feel the faculty is interested in your well-being as a person?

2. Have you at times felt that your personal needs have been ignored or minimized? Explain.

3. Does the program offer seminars, workshops counseling or support groups that deal with personal growth and development? Or is the information about such activities made available to you?

4. Do you feel you have grown or changed in a positive way direction as a result of your experience in the program?

Professional growth and Development

1. Does the program provide opportunities or give suggestions for professional growth? If so, what is offered?

2. Who has contributed most to your professional growth and development?

3. What experience in your doctoral training has contributes most to your professional growth and development?

Residence Requirement

1. What are your feelings about the residence requirement?

2. Are there advantages and/or disadvantages to the requirement?

3. Have the requirements directly affected you? If so, how?

Scheduling of Courses

1. Do you feel the courses are scheduled in an organized manner that contributes to the successful completion of the program?

2. What changes if any would you suggest regarding the scheduling of courses?

Socialization in the Culture of the Program

1. Describe the social atmosphere in the program? Is it supportive? Is it competitive?

2. Do you feel that certain behaviors, attitudes or requirements, spoken or unspoken, that you have to perform or exhibit in order to feel a part of the program or that will help you succeed in the program?

Support and Assistance

1. Do you feel the program provides adequate support and assistance for your academic needs? Emotional needs? Financial needs? Explain how these needs have or have not been met?

2. If not, what are some recommendations for improvement that will allow the program to better meet your needs in the future?

Recommendations

What are three recommendations for improving the overall doctoral program? Give them in order of priority.